

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EDUCATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

February 25, 1997

Business Meeting

MINUTES

The Board of Education and the Board of Vocational Education met for the regular business meeting in Conference Rooms C and D of the James Monroe Building in Richmond, Virginia, Tuesday, February 25, 1997, with the following members present:

Ms. Michelle Easton, President	Mr. John W. Russell
Mrs. Lil Tuttle, Vice President	Mr. R. Lee Ware
Mr. J. Brandon Bell	Mrs. Cheri P. Yecke
Mr. Rayford L. Harris Sr.	
Mr. Robert H. Patterson, Jr.	Dr. Richard T. La Pointe
	Secretary and Superintendent of Public Instruction

Ms. Easton, president, presided and called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

Welcome

Ms. Easton introduced and welcomed a new member, Senator John W. Russell to the Board of Education. Ms. Easton also announced that Senator J. Brandon Bell has been reappointed for a full term to the Board of Education.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Easton gave the invocation and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion for approval of the minutes of the January 9 meeting. Copies of the

minutes have been distributed previously to all members of the Board for review. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Yecke and carried unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Easton said that they would move item F, *Review of Inservice Training Course Requirements*, until after lunch, and they will hold item E, *Promulgation of Regulations Governing Projects for Regional Alternative Education Programs for Suspended and Expelled Students Under Exemption B, Section 9-6.14:4.1, B,4 of Code of Virginia*, until the March meeting.

The motion was made by Mrs. Tuttle, seconded by Mrs. Yecke and carried unanimously for approval of the agenda.

Highlight on Students

The Godwin High School Madrigals of Henrico County Public Schools sang for the Board of Education and guests. They were led by Choral Director, Sherri Matthews. Mr. John McGinty, Principal, Mills Godwin High School introduced the group.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Ware made a motion to adopt the following items on the consent agenda.

Final Review of Financial Report on Literary Fund

Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Applications for Literary Fund

Loans

Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Release of Literary Fund Loans for
Placement on Waiting List

The motion was seconded by Senator Russell.

Final Review of Financial Report on Literary Fund

The Superintendent's recommendation for approval of the financial report on the status of the Literary Fund as of December 31, 1996, was accepted by the Board of Education's vote on the consent agenda.

Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Applications for Literary Fund Loans

The Superintendent's recommendation for approval of the applications for Literary Fund Loans for the following projects was accepted by the Board of Education's vote on the consent agenda, subject to

approval of final plans (Section 22.1-140 of the *Code of Virginia*) and availability of funds:

COUNTY, CITY OR TOWN	SCHOOL	AMOUNT
Campbell County	William Campbell Middle/High	\$3,525,100.00
Greensville County	Greensville Elementary	5,000,000.00
	TOTAL	\$8,525,100.00

Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Release of Literary Fund Loans for Placement on Waiting List

The Superintendent's recommendation is that no funds be released as available funds are being held to meet statutory requirements. It is recommended that funding for two projects in the amount of \$8,525,100 be deferred and the projects placed on the First Priority Waiting List. In addition, it is recommended that priority placement be granted for the Sugar Grove Combined project in Smith County (\$115,000) for construction of a new roof. The division superintendent indicates that the current structure will likely not survive an additional winter. There is not sufficient funding available without the literary fund to complete this project and remain within the approved budget for 1996-97.

First Priority Waiting List

COUNTY, CITY OR TOWN	SCHOOL	AMOUNT
Campbell County	William Campbell Middle/High	\$3,525,100.00
Greensville County	Greensville Elementary	5,000,000.00
	TOTAL	\$8,525,100.00

DISCUSSION OF CURRENT ISSUES

Mrs. Yecke stated that on January 24 she attended a meeting of division superintendents and representatives from Region 5. In the course of the discussions it became clear that there were several areas in which communication needs to be clarified regarding the new Standards of Learning and the proposed new assessment instrument. Mrs. Yecke said that they discussed the following issues:

1. *Why is the fifth grade history SOLs not being tested at grade five?*

After the adoption of the new history/social studies SOLs, several professional organizations from the social studies community met with a subcommittee of the Board over a period of many months to discuss concerns over the scope and sequence of these standards. There was consensus that the biggest challenge for divisions throughout the state was at grade five, where there was the most variation in subject matter. Another issue raised was that of building level accountability and the accompanying cost-savings.

To allow maximum flexibility at the local level and to address all of these issues, the assessment RFP was written so that the grade five history test would cover only the SOL material at grade four, the grade eight test would cover the SOL materials for grades five, six, & seven (U.S. History parts 1 & 2 and Civics/Economics), and the high school test would cover the SOL material for grades eight & nine, and World history/Geography parts 1 & 2.

The assessment organization differs slightly from the SOL organization, and the members of the subcommittee were pleased in that it addressed their concerns. No division is restricted to or limited by the grade level labels of the SOLs, but may want to consider the implications of the assessment layout in determining scope and sequence.

Also, in response to the subcommittee's concerns about a scope and sequence of skills, it was agreed that the assessment content review committee for history/social studies would compile a list of specific skills, by grade level, to assist both teachers and the assessment company. This idea was so popular that the English content review committee is also preparing a skills addendum. Both of these reference manuals will be completed this summer and will be sent to all divisions at that time.

2. *Why has the Board chosen not to include science and history/social studies tests in the new norm-referenced tests (Standard 9)?*

This decision in no way means that science and history/social studies are less important than math and English. The decision to require only math and English is based upon the fact that the match between the SOLs and test content was very low. The Board thus believed that including these

scores would provide a false picture of student achievement. Localities are free to administer the science and history/social studies tests at no additional charge, and can keep their scores in-house for their own purposes. The state will not collect this data.

3. *Other divisions are raising their graduation standards. We have chosen to wait to see what the new SOAs require, but by waiting it almost appears that we do not care about higher standards.*

According to regulations, only the State Board of Education can raise graduation requirements. Any locality that chooses to do so must get approval from the State Board before implementing such standards. In September, several divisions approached the Board with proposals for increase requirements, and we asked them all to delay until the SOAs were completed. It did not make sense to allow changes now only to possibly change again when the new SOAs are released.

It was requested that Dr. La Pointe send out a superintendent's memo to get the word out to localities and that the same information be included in the monthly newsletter to local school boards.

The General Assembly passed a bill to set up an advisory board to supervise the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind. The advisory board will consist of individuals appointed by the legislature.

The gifted school in Spotsylvania that the Board of Education approved at its last meeting was also approved by the General Assembly with the same conditions that were put in place by Board of Education.

Mr. Harris said that he had received several letters from parents and teachers concerning the Standards of Learning and Standards of Assessments. They feel that the Board needs to move forward now and give attention to a well-balanced curriculum for education in the public schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

First Review of Regulations Proposed for Elimination

The Superintendent's recommendation is to accept the agenda item for discussion and review.

Dr. James Laws explained Governor Allen's Executive Order Number fifteen (94) and reviewed the process for elimination: (1) the regulation is reviewed by the individual or persons in the Department working directly with the regulation, (2) the regulation is submitted to Dr. Laws for review of

recommendations made, (3) a panel of in-house individuals reviews the regulations, (4) the regulations are submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for his opinion and sometimes also to the Board president for review, (6) packet is submitted to the Secretary of Education.

Ms. Easton requested an overview of the regulations that they have looked at and the regulations needing something done with them for the March meeting.

First Review and Approval of Virginia State Assessment Program: Inclusion and Accommodation Guidelines for Students with Disabilities

The Superintendent's recommendation is to accept the recommendation of the Assessment Policy Advisory Committee and approve the document, *Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Testing in the Virginia State Assessment Program*.

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion to accept the guidelines. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Yecke and carried unanimously.

First Review and Approval of Virginia State Assessment Program: Inclusion and Accommodation Guidelines for Limited English Proficient Students

The Superintendent's recommendation is to accept the recommendation of the Assessment Policy Advisory Committee and approve the document, *Limited English Proficient Students: Guidelines for Testing in the Virginia State Assessment Program*.

Mrs. Yecke made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Assessment Policy Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and carried unanimously.

First Review and Approval of 1997 Field Test of Standards of Learning Assessments Inclusion and Accommodation Guidelines for Students with Disabilities

The Superintendent's recommendation is to accept the recommendation of the Assessment Policy Advisory Committee and approve the document, *Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Participation in the 1997 Field Test of the Standards of Learning Assessments*.

Mr. Harris made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Assessment Policy Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ware and carried unanimously.

First Review and Approval of 1997 Field Test of the Standards of Learning Assessments: Inclusion and Accommodation Guidelines for Limited English Proficient Students

The Superintendent's recommendation is to accept the recommendation of the Assessment Policy

Advisory Committee and approve the document, *Limited English Proficient Students: Guidelines for Participation in the 1997 Field Test of the Standards of Learning Assessments*.

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Assessment Policy Advisory Committee. Mrs. Yecke seconded and carried unanimously.

Public Comment

The following persons spoke during the public comment period:

Cheri James
Tom Smith
Vicki Messick
Briley Pollard
William E. Dugger

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion that the Board of Education go into an executive session under *Virginia Code* '2.1-344.A for the following: discussion with a counsel on litigation, Virginia School Boards Association v. Virginia Board of Education, as permitted under subsection 7; discussion of the personal information and personnel matters related to teacher license applications as permitted under subsections 1 and 4; and discussion of the content and format of an assessment test as permitted under subsection 7. Mrs. Yecke seconded the motion and the Board went into an executive session at 11:00 a.m.

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion that the Board certify by roll call that to the best of each members knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the executive session that this certification motion applies, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the executive session were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

Board Roll Call:

Ms. Easton - Aye
Ms. Tuttle - Aye
Senator Bell - Aye
Mr. Harris - Aye
Mr. Patterson - Aye
Senator Russell - Aye
Mrs. Yecke - Aye

Mr. Ware abstained but gave his word that the Board did, in fact, follow procedures.
The Board reconvened in a public session at 1:35 p.m.

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion that the superintendent's recommendations to the three licensure issues, case #1, case #2, and case #3, be approved and that they delay the decision for the fourth case until the March meeting to attain new evidence. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and carried unanimously.

Ms. Easton announced that the Board will go back into an executive session after item K, *First Review of Proposed Revisions to the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, for more teacher licensure items.

First Review of Proposed Revisions to the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia

The Superintendent's recommendation is that the Board accept the proposed revisions on first review and release the document for Administrative Process Act proceedings and public comment.

Senator Bell made a motion that the Boards receive the document for further discussion. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tuttle.

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion that in 2001 six tests are phased into the Standards of Accreditation for the standard diploma and in 2003 ten tests are required for students to take and pass before graduation. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Yecke. By a show of hands, six Board members favored the motion to phase in for fairness and two opposed.

Mrs. Yecke made a motion that the advanced diploma requires students in 2001 to take and pass a total of nine tests (three in English, two in Math, two in a lab science, and two in History and Social Studies.) In 2003 students would have to take and pass a total of twelve tests (three in English, three in Math, three in a lab science and three in History and Social Studies) for the advanced diploma. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tuttle. By a show of hands six Board members favored the motion and two opposed.

Senator Bell made a motion to accept the recommendations from the Superintendent as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and carried unanimously.

The Board of Education commended Dr. La Pointe, Mr. Finley and the rest of the DOE staff for the excellent work in developing the Standards of Accreditation document.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Tuttle made a motion that the Board of Education go into an executive session under *Virginia Code* ' 2.1-344.A for the following: discussion with a counsel on litigation, Virginia School Boards Association v. Virginia Board of Education, as permitted under subsection 7; discussion of the content and format of an assessment test as permitted under subsection 11. Mrs. Yecke seconded the motion and the Board went into an executive session at 3:45 p.m.

Mrs. Yecke made a motion that the Board certify by roll call that to the best of each member's knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the executive session that this certification motion applies, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the executive session was heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

Board Roll Call:

Ms. Easton - Aye
Senator Bell - Aye
Mr. Harris - Aye
Senator Russell - Aye
Mrs. Yecke - Aye

Mr. Ware abstained but gave his word that the Board did, in fact, follow procedures.

The Board reconvened in a public session at 4:25 p.m.

Review of Inservice Training Course Requirements

The Board took no action on this item.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Easton adjourned the meeting of the Virginia Board of Education and the Board of the Vocational Education at 4:30 p.m.

President